

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-72 (Previously Canceled).

Claims 73-78 (Canceled).

Claim 79 (Previously Canceled).

Claims 80-86 (Canceled).

87. (Previously Presented) A process for producing a catalyst-body, comprising:

preparing cordierite materials comprising a Si source, an Al source and a Mg source as well as a binder, some of said Si, Al and Mg sources being replaced by a noble metal-containing compound,

forming said cordierite materials into a honeycomb shape,

heating said honeycomb shape to remove said binder, and

firing said honeycomb shape in a reduced pressure atmosphere at a pressure of not higher than 4000 Pa, a reducing atmosphere, an oxygen-containing atmosphere or an oxygen-free atmosphere to form a catalyst-ceramic body comprising a ceramic support of a honeycomb structure comprising a cordierite composition.

88. (Previously Presented) A process for producing a catalyst-ceramic body, comprising:

preparing cordierite materials comprising a Si source, an Al source and a Mg source as well as a binder, some of said Si, Al and Mg sources being replaced by a noble metal-containing compound and a Ce-containing compound,

forming said cordierite materials into a honeycomb shape,

heating said honeycomb shape to remove said binder, and

firing said honeycomb shape in a reduced pressure atmosphere at a pressure of not higher than 4000 Pa, a reducing atmosphere, an oxygen-containing atmosphere or an oxygen-free atmosphere to form a catalyst-ceramic body comprising a ceramic support of a honeycomb structure comprising a cordierite composition.

89. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 87, wherein said fired honeycomb structure is further heated to a predetermined temperature and then rapidly cooled from said predetermined temperature.

90. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 87, wherein said fired honeycomb structure is further rapidly cooled to a predetermined temperature during cooling from a firing temperature.

91. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 89, wherein a temperature different between said predetermined temperature and the temperature after said rapid cooling is not more than 900°C.

92. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 87, wherein said fired honeycomb structure is further subjected to a shock wave.

93. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 92, wherein said shock wave is provided by ultrasound or vibration.

Claims 94-99 (Canceled).

Claims 100-101 (Previously Canceled).

Claim 102 (Canceled).

103. (Previously Presented) The process for producing a catalyst-ceramic body according to claim 89, wherein said cordierite has a composition corresponding to a composition expressed by $2\text{MgO} / 2 \cdot 2\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 5\text{SiO}_3$.